

MINUTES

Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force

Thursday June 12, 2008

8:30 AM

Council Chambers

Municipal Building

93 Cottage Street

I. Call to Order at 8:35 AM

Members present were Chairman Paul Paradis, Vice Chairman Chris Fogg, Secretary Anne Krieg, Police Chief Nate Young, Harbormaster Charlie Phippen, Fred Cook, George Seavey, Mary Opdyke, Amy Powers, and Greg Gordon

II. Excused Absences

Krieg moved, with a second by Opdyke to excuse both Bob Bahr and Greg Veilleux from the meeting. All were in favor of the motion.

III. Minutes

The minutes for May 8th 2008 and May 22, 2008 were approved with no editions.

IV. Adoption of agenda was passed by a motion made by Krieg and seconded by Phippen.

V. Staff Reports

A. Paul Paradis reviewed Council action on drop-off point recommendations noted that Council approved the recommendations.

Gordon asked to change the date; the Chair feels we should keep the date and try to work with it noting we can choose on the second date.

It was noted that Art in the Park is also that day which will help with the testing conditions.

The Chair reviewed some of the comments he has heard, that the Alternative was open to it.

The owner of Sea of Cotton store spoke and said the art show will be a draw and that she was excited about the test

The Chamber will alert the membership and do a survey after the test

B. Charlie Phippen, Harbor Master reviewed how and when town notifies industry about new pax cap and season policies

He said he uses the agents. At the end of the fiscal year he would send a report.

Powers stressed the need for an official document for any policy or operational changes approved from the Destination Management Plan.

VI. Regular Business

A. The representative was not present to continue discussion with Ocean Properties on future plans for West Street and service to Cruise Ship tenders and passengers.

B. Cruise Ship Fees

i. Report from Cruise Fee sub-committee.

Paul reviewed the work of the sub-committee. Sustainability was added as a line item. The sub-committee will now work out the fee to meet the budget.

Some discussion ensued on the fee setting. Comparisons to Ocean Properties' fees were noted. Powers noted we have a more key ports for the itineraries than Newport Rhode Island (Newport's fee is 4.00, ours would be 4.91).

The fee is covering services and preparing to construct projects; the Chair noted we need to go through this exercise to determine how the monies are spent. It's critical, he said, that we keep the fees out of the town's general fund. Some services are funded out of the general fund and the Capital improvement Program (CIP) is not always safe either. A type of an Enterprise Fund would help keep the confidence in the industry that the fee is going to service/operations/capital projects.

It was discussed if we should we increase security monies. The Chair noted that it depends upon the grant; we may need to adjust fees as we move forward.

Powers noted that Carnival (80k) brings the most passengers here. Paradis, Powers, Krieg and Fogg will meet informally next week with them in Portland.

Other points included pedestrian/sidewalk enhancements for ADA should also be factored in. The potential use of funds was then discussed at length. No action was taken.

C. Walking Map

i. Report from walking map sub-committee

Krieg reviewed work. It was discussed when it would be given out. The necessary follow up includes getting costs and list out what else needs to happen to re-do the map.

Task Force members noted the need for a visitor kiosk as soon as they get off as place to give out maps.

The group discussed whether this is this a waste if the ship is giving out the maps. It was questioned whether there is a difference between what we might do and what the Chamber does, along with the cruise ship to give information to passengers.

The Chamber noted that they do need a pertinent map. There needs to be a more convenient and efficient manner to get the information to the passengers so they know where they are when they get off the bus and how to get back to the Pier. This is specific information that a generic map cannot provide.

It was questioned whether we should we seek temporary kiosks like Portland. It was maintained that we should partner with the industry to put our information with their map.

Follow up includes talking to Tom Dow about how to incorporate/coordinate this effort. Staff also needs to get prices and set up process/timeline to produce new maps.

D. Tender wake reduction.

Phippen explained that the tender operators are often putting the boat in gear at the dock to stay there. This disturbs the small basin area. He indicated they need to tie up to the dock, but they are not often trained to line up with a small harbor, only next to ship's harbor. The operator's receive certificate training only. Phippen continued to note we need to update the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to tell them of this expectation. It does not appear we need an ordinance change but it would be advantageous to have the task force endorse the compliance with federal and state regulations for tender operations. He offered that perhaps we give a card for violation (authorized by the Police Department) to stick on the wheelhouse the (inner harbor chart shows the requirements). It was further noted that the tender operators are often trained to keep the boat in gear and not tie up. It was also noted that sometimes Charlie shows them how to rig up.

As follow up, Phippen will write up a request for a motion.

The Cruise ship study recognizes tender operations create prop wash as an issue.

After some options for a motion were discussed it was noted that action from the Council is not necessary on this item.

Phippen moved with a second from Seavey to brief the Town Council on the operational challenge with the tender operation. This can be handled at a staff level. There are tools and empowerment in place for the Harbormaster to enforce tender wake reduction practices. This is a request for Town Council support to communicate to the industry the need for alternative docking methods to reduce noise and wake in the inner harbor. All were in favor of the motion.

E. Motor Coach Licensing Fees was tabled to next meeting

The Crippins Creek project was discussed to ask if any studies are available for traffic and bus traffic. This project I planned for 4 phases: bus terminal, visitor center, ANP center and then commercial activity. They are currently conducting soil sampling.

It is expected that the years 09/10 are set for first phase. The group discussed if this should be part of their work and no action was taken.

Fogg moved with a second from Young that the Visitor Center project at Crippins Creek should be placed as a low priority project for the Task Force. All were in favor of the motions.

VII. Public Comment

ANP staff person Liz Weston asked about the licensing fees for motor coaches. She noted they do have a fee to operate in the Park. She was hoping to work with the town to do a fee, noting that 150 permits are granted yearly to go through the Park.

Gordon noted that buses are regulated by DOT and that we need to educate the buses on our regulations and rules, and not overregulate them

Weston thought it would be a mechanism to work with the buses to ensure they are following the rules of the Town.

Fogg noted that the American Bus Association conference is utilized to streamline this communication.

Powers discussed the 4th of July activities with a ship coming in. There should be a press release on the ship

The group discussed issues with the 4th, specifically any operational issues. This is a test to see if we should allow ships.

VIII. Items for next agenda

The group will discuss the second bus drop off test for the 22nd as well as debrief on the 4th /5th of July's operations.

Paradis, Powers, Krieg and Fogg will report on their attendance at a conference on cruise ships in Portland.

Discussion will also continue on fees, maps and with Ocean Properties.

IX. Set next meeting time, date and place

A. 8:30am, July 10, 2008, Council chambers.

X. Adjournment at 10:35 AM was passed unanimously by a motion by Young and a second from Phippen.

Minutes were prepared by Anne Krieg for Task Force review at their meeting October 23, 2008.